

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KUWAIT 00157 140813Z

15
ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 MC-02 OMB-01 AID-20 TRSE-00

EB-11 IGA-02 DRC-01 EUR-25 PRS-01 ACDA-19 H-03 /150 W

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P 140721Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8508
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

S E C R E T KUWAIT 0157

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS KU
SUBJECT: US MILITARY SAGES TO KUWAIT

REF: A) RE TOW MISSILE: KUWAIT 4219; KUWAIT 0094
B) RE TRAINING: SECDEF 042309Z JAN 74; KUWAIT 0146
C) RE MOTOR TRANSPORT & ENGINEERING EQUIP: DA 092049Z
JAN 74, KUWAIT 0130

SUMMARY: KUWAITIS ANXIOUS MOVE AHEAD ON ARMS PURCHASES.
THEY DEEPLY CONCERNED USG RESPONDING SLOWLY TO THEIR MILITARY
REQUESTS FOR POLITICAL REASONS. THEY FEELING PRESSURE AS WELL
TO PURCHASE SOVIET WEAPONS. WE HAVE COUNTERED THAT FAULT FOR
ANY US DELAYS LIES LARGELY AT DOOR OF GOK. HOWEVER PRESENT
SITUATION CALLS FOR URGENT USG ACTION TO RESPOND TO CURRENT
KUWAITI MILITARY REQUESTS. END SUMMARY

1. AT AIRPORT TO GREET SOMALI PRESIDENT JAN 13, MINDEF SHAIKH
SAAD AND CHIEF OF STAFF BEN MUBARAK BUTTON-HOLED ME TO SAY THEY
WERE UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE TO EXPEDITE MILITARY PURCHASES AND
PROGRAMS AND WERE UNHAPPY WITH "SLOW USG RESPONSE" TO NUMBER
OF REQUESTS THEY HAVE MADE OVER LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. SAAD AND
MUBARAK SAID THEY COULD ONLY ASSUME USG DELIBERATELY HOLDING UP
REPLIES AS MATTER OF POLICY. I REPLIED I DID NOT BELIEVE ANY
DELAYS WERE MATTER OF OFFICIAL POLICY, BUT I FELT CONSTRAINED

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PAGE 02 KUWAIT 00157 140813Z

TO OBSERVE THAT USG HAD GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS OVER MANY MONTHS

TO TRY HELP MEET KUWAITI MILITARY NEEDS, AND GOK RESPONSE SO FAR TO OUR OFFERS HAD BEEN MEAGER TO SAY THE LEAST. THERE WAS ALSO FUEL PROBLEM THAT KUWAITIS WELL AWARE OF. THESE AND OTHER FACTORS MIGHT HAVE COMBINED TO MAKE USG LESS ENTHUSIASTIC THAN BEFORE TO HURRY TO ANSWER KUWAITI REQUESTS.

2. MUBARAK SAID NECESSARY KUWAITI MILITARY STUDIES OF ALL ALTERNATIVES HAD TAKEN MUCH TIME, AND THEN OCTOBER WAR HAD COME ALONG TO PREOCCUPY GOK. NOW, HOWEVER, HE ASSERTED, GOK DETERMINED TO MOVE AHEAD. MUBARAK SAID KUWAIT WANTED US INPUT INTO ITS MILITARY BUILD-UP BUT NOT PREPARED WAIT LONG TIME; MUCH AS HE DISAPPROVED PERSONALLY, HE SAID, KUWAIT WAS SENDING MISSION TO MOSCOW SHORTLY. I SAID IT WAS MY PERSONAL VIEW THAT KUWAITI PURCHASE OF SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT COULD AFFECT TYPE OF MILITARY/ SECURITY EQUIPMENT USG WOULD BE WILLING PROVIDE KUWAIT MILITARY.

3. MUBARAK SAID "DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ IN NEWSPAPERS" (REFERENCE WAS TO RECENT ARTICLES IN LOCAL PRESS SPECULATING ON POSSIBLE KUWAITI PURCHASE OF ARMS FROM SOVIETS AND KUWAITI MISSION TO MOSCOW SOON HEADED BY FONMIN). MUBARAK REPEATED HE AND MINDEF UNDER INTENSE PRESSURE GET STARTED ON ARMS PURCHASES. MUBARAK SAID HE NEEDED IMMEDIATE ANSWERS FROM USG ON TOW MISSILE, MOTOR TRANSPORT AND ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT, AND PILOT TRAINING.

4. COMMENT: THROUGHOUT ABOVE EXCHANGE WE WERE ALL SMILING ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT TALK WAS TOUGH. SAAD AND MUBARAK UNMISTAKABLY REFLECTED GOK CONCERN THAT USG DRAGGING ITS FEET ON THEIR REQUESTS FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WHILE I MADE PERFECTLY CLEAR TO THEM KUWAITI PROCRASTINATION OVER MANY MONTHS WAS, IN MY VIEW, IMPORTANT FACTOR IN CURRENT SLOW PROGRESS.

5. WHILE I DO NOT THINK GOK YET REALLY INTENDS TO BUY SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR ITS FORCES IN KUWAIT, NEITHER DO I CONSIDER MUBARAK'S MENTION OF MISSION TO MOSCOW A CRUDE ATTEMPT TO THREATEN US. GOK UNDOUBTEDLY FEELING PRESSURE FROM SOVIETS AND OTHER "PROGRESSIVE" ARAB STATES TO REPAY RUSSIAN FRIENDSHIP FOR ARABS BY PURCHASING SOME SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR HARD CURRENCY, AND BRITISH HAVE REPORT (WHICH THEY STILL CHECKING OUT) THAT KUWAITIS HAVE BOUGHT SOME RUSSIAN TANKS AND PERHAPS OTHER ITEMS FOR THEIR FORCE TO BE PERMANENTLY
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PAGE 03 KUWAIT 00157 140813Z

STATIONED IN SYRIA. IT WOULD OF COURSE, BE VERY BAD EXAMPLE FOR WHOLE GULF
IF GOK DOES DECIDE BUY SOVIET ARMS FOR KUWAIT; I CAN EASILY IMAGINE SHAIKH ZAYID OF UAE, FOR EXAMPLE WANTING FOLLOW SUIT. THERE WOULD BE NO QUICKER WAY TO PUT RUSSIAN CAT AMONG GULF PIGEONS THAN FOR KUWAITIS TO BUY RUSSIAN ARMS.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: I EARNESTLY SOLICIT DEPT'S AND DOD'S

BEST EFFORTS TO PRODUCE ADDITIONAL REPLIES TO REFTELS WHICH
ARE CURRENT KUWAITI REQUESTS FOR OFFERS AND INFORMATION FROM USG,
PRIMARILY ON TOW MISSILE5. MOTOR TRANSPORT, ENGINEERING EQUIP-
MENT, AND TRAINING FOR PILOTS. ARMED WITH ANSWERS, WE WILL
PURSUE THESE PROGRAMS HOPEFULLY TO EARLY CONCLUSION AND THEN
PRESS ON TO LARGER ITEMS SUCH AS AIRCRAFT AND IMPROVED HAWK.
I CONSIDER SITUATION HERE REQUIRES URGENT ACTION.
STOLTZFUS

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